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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 23 October 2001, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Hasmy ..... (Malaysia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 86: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/56/20 and Corr.1, 306 and 394)

1. **Mr. Droba** (Slovakia) said that his country's 30-year tradition of outer space research, space science and space exploration had been crowned in 1999 by a short-term space flight by the first Slovak astronaut as part of a Russian/French/Slovak project.

2. His delegation welcomed the proposal to enlarge the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and was proud that its own active involvement in the field had been recognized by the Committee's endorsement of Slovakia as a full-fledged new member, along with the other countries which until then had shared a seat on a rotating basis. Slovakia's decision to join the Committee had provided strong motivation to the Slovak scientific community. The Commission for Research and the Peaceful Use of Outer Space, established in 2000 as an advisory body to the Council for Science and Technology, was doing useful work; Slovakia actively participated in the recently established Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education and also supported the efforts to implement the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). Several schools in Slovakia had participated in international educational programmes; and Slovak researchers were currently taking part in projects on the peaceful uses of outer space in relation to the environment, telecommunications, space physics, geophysics, astronomy, the life sciences, meteorology and remote sensing.

3. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) said that the first 13 flights in the International Space Station assembly had been completed, and that, in just over one year, the International Space Station had developed from a modest facility to a complex and advanced spacecraft in which the crew lived, worked and conducted research. A new United States airlock and a Russian docking compartment had made it possible to spacewalk directly from the International Space Station without the space shuttle, thereby facilitating construction and expanding research possibilities. By early December, three more spacecraft would visit the International Space Station.

4. April 2001 had marked the twentieth anniversary of the flight of Columbia, the first United States space shuttle. Since that time, the shuttle had launched nearly 1.4 million kilograms of cargo and more than 600 passengers and pilots. Over 850 payloads had flown, including hundreds of individual experiments. The shuttle had mapped 90 per cent of the earth's surface with unprecedented precision, and astronauts on board had discovered and confirmed ancient impact craters on earth, tracked deforestation, monitored coral reefs, studied air and water pollution and documented the effects of drought, floods, volcanoes and hurricanes. Hundreds of investigations had been conducted on the effects of weightlessness on plants, animals and materials aboard the shuttle. As a result of improvements in the shuttle's safety and capabilities over the years, its cargo capacity had increased by 12 tons. Its annual operating costs had decreased by 40 per cent; engine improvements and other upgrades had reduced estimated risks during launching by 80 per cent and the number of problems experienced in flights had dropped by 70 per cent. The space shuttle fleet was expected to fly for at least another decade and probably much longer.

5. His delegation welcomed the progress achieved in revitalizing the agendas and methods of work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees, particularly the Legal Subcommittee, which, since 1992, had adopted five major outer space treaties and various sets of international principles by a process of consensus and multilateral diplomacy. In particular, 2001 marked the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space and the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries which established the freedom of States to determine all aspects of their international cooperation, whether bilateral or multilateral, commercial or non-commercial, and to choose the most effective mode of cooperation in order to allocate resources efficiently.

6. His delegation looked forward to the Legal Subcommittee's consideration in 2002 of the concept of the "launching State", contained in the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects and the Registration Convention. On the basis of reports produced by the Office for Outer Space

Affairs and the secretariat of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), the Legal Subcommittee had also achieved progress in its consideration of a draft convention and protocols for the registration of security interests in high-value mobile equipment, including aircraft, rail and space property. In that connection, his delegation supported the recommendation to retain the item on the agenda and the establishment of a consultative mechanism to review the issues relating to the item.

7. His delegation expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the useful documentation issued by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, particularly the compilation of information on the use of space technology within the United Nations system and its proposals on specific ways of promoting greater cooperation in space exploration on the basis of the results of UNISPACE III.

8. He welcomed the substantial progress made with regard to the plan of action for implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III. In that connection, the United States had provided $500,000 to the Office for Outer Space Affairs to support up to five regional workshops on the use of global navigation satellite systems for environmental applications and sustainable development. The first workshop had been held in Malaysia in August; and subsequent workshops were scheduled in 2001 and 2002 in Austria, Chile and Africa.

9. His delegation welcomed the consensus in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on enlarging its membership. The chairs of regional groups should be notified of the Committee's recommendation that they should hold consultations among those members which were also members of the Committee and submit a report to the Committee on those consultations.

10. Lastly, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, he said that his delegation categorically rejected the assertions made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concerning its space activities. The United States was involved in unprecedented international space cooperation, and there was no arms race in outer space. The United States space programme had been and would continue to be guided by the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the outer space treaties. To argue otherwise, as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had sought to do, was baseless and a distortion of the truth.

11. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan), said that space technologies in the field of Earth observation had the potential to help solve global problems related to resources, food and the environment, and the everyday utilization of space technology had already become indispensable in the areas of telecommunications, broadcasting and meteorological observations. Japan's successful launching of the H-II A rocket in August 2001 had given great impetus to space activities in Japan, and would provide the technological foundation for launching satellites and developing industrial applications for public benefit. The participation of a Japanese astronaut in a United States space shuttle flight to assemble the International Space Station was one example of his Government's international cooperation. Upon completion of that mission, briefings by the astronaut and his colleagues throughout Japan had sparked a great deal of interest in space activities among young people.

12. His Government was very much in favour of the mechanism set up by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development adopted at UNISPACE III. Japan itself was especially interested in working on the issue of the future development of space activities through the development of human resources. It welcomed the fact that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had at its 2001 session adopted a work plan on the issue of space debris, and hoped that it would consider standards for reducing debris in outer space, the technical aspects of which had long been studied by Japan's space agencies.

13. **Mr. Tiwathia** (India) noted with satisfaction that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had assigned priorities to the recommendations of UNISPACE III as a first step towards implementing them; his delegation looked forward to active participation as a member of the action teams and as interim coordinator for the recommendation to improve the management of the Earth's natural resources. India also supported the proposed enlargement of the membership of the Committee. His delegation was also pleased with the productive work done in the past year by the two Subcommittees.

14. Turning to the activities of the Indian space programme in 2001, he said that a geosynchronous satellite launch vehicle had been successfully launched in April 2001, placing an experimental satellite into geosynchronous transfer orbit; that flight was an important step in achieving the capability for launching geostationary satellites. The various components of the Indian National Satellite (INSAT) system made it one of the largest domestic communication satellite systems in the world. New areas such as interactive education through satellites and telemedicine applications were also being given priority, in addition to the operational programmes. The system supported domestic applications in areas such as crop forecasting, ground and surface water harvesting, forest surveying, wasteland and potential fishing-zone mapping, urban planning and environmental monitoring; and the data from those satellites was being shared with several countries under commercial agreements. A new initiative had been taken to develop the infrastructure to make national spatial data available for various development planning activities.

15. India was contributing significantly to space education as part of its international cooperation. The Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific had organized courses for almost 300 scholars from 39 countries. The Indian Space Research Organization and the French national space agency had agreed to conduct a joint satellite mission to study the atmospheric water cycle and the effect of tropical convective systems on the global climate. Indian satellite data was being provided regularly to the European Space Agency (ESA) and the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). In addition, the numerous public outreach programmes held during World Space Week in October 2000 had focused on the contribution of space technology to improving the quality of life.

16. The United Nations should continue to lead the efforts to enhance international cooperation in preserving outer space as the common heritage of mankind.

17. **Mr. Ramli** (Malaysia) said that the militarization of outer space must be avoided at all costs and that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had to do its utmost to prevent any development that could trigger a new arms race in outer space. There was an urgent need to strengthen the existing legal system, which was clearly inadequate in the face of the rapid developments in outer space. Additional agreements had to be concluded to prohibit the testing, deployment and use of any weapons, components or objects intended for space warfare. His delegation therefore welcomed the Committee's continued consideration of the item entitled "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes".

18. Malaysia was committed to the development of space science and its technological applications, focusing on remote sensing, satellite technology, telecommunications, meteorology and education. There were currently six meteorological satellite ground stations in Malaysia, and the data they produced supported both weather forecasting and non-meteorological applications such as detection of forest fires or other dangerous conditions and agricultural surveying. His Government had also taken steps to develop its human resources in the scientific fields. Space science courses were being offered in several local universities and space science had been made a compulsory subject in secondary schools in order to generate interest at an early age. Malaysia had, furthermore, hosted a number of international training courses and workshops on remote sensing and satellite technology, as well as the first United Nations/United States of America Workshop on the Use of Global Navigation Satellite Systems, held in 2001.

19. His delegation strongly believed that the admission of new members to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would strengthen it, and hoped that the Committee's recommendations to that effect would be endorsed by the General Assembly.

20. **Mr. Haggag** (Egypt) commended the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in strengthening international cooperation in the exploration of outer space and promoting its use for peaceful purposes by all States and peoples without restrictions or discrimination. Such cooperation had been evident in the many international and regional conferences and workshops that had been organized during the period covered by the report (A/56/20). The Committee's role in establishing a legal framework governing the use of outer space through the adoption of five international treaties on the subject was a matter for pride. His delegation wished particularly to commend the Committee's work on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. It welcomed the list of priorities that had been established and looked forward to the deliberations of the action

teams. The action teams should continue their work until the General Assembly carried out its review and appraisal of the progress made in implementing the recommendations at its fifty-ninth session.

21. His delegation wished to reaffirm the importance it attached to the wider use of space technology and its applications, and of remote sensing, in various fields of development for the benefit of the developing countries. In that context he called on all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in support of activities for the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, particularly priority projects and proposals for the benefit of the developing countries including those relating to disaster management, management of natural resources and satellite communications for tele-education and telemedicine applications. At the same time, his delegation looked forward to further efforts to strengthen the capabilities of the developing countries in the fields of research and capacity-building to enable them to benefit from space applications in various fields, particularly agriculture, industry, health, medicine and remote sensing.

22. His delegation wished to stress the importance of compliance by all States that used nuclear power sources in outer space with the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space contained in General Assembly resolution 47/68. If those principles were to be amended, that should be done through scientific and technological agreement involving all States on a basis of equality.

23. Some years earlier, his country had established the national space, science and technology research council and the Ministry of State for scientific research. The purpose of the council was to develop a comprehensive national programme to take advantage of the peaceful applications of the use of outer space and to attain the technological and development objectives of the State, including the adoption of satellite technology for the study of desert regions, while training scientific personnel, developing an Egyptian space programme and using space technology and its applications in the development of local industry. In recent years, his country had achieved some success through the promotion of space applications and was determined to continue its various programmes in that area in cooperation with the United Nations and with Member States.

24. **Mr. Gappoev** (Russian Federation) said that an arms race in outer space or any form of armed confrontation in outer space was unacceptable and contrary to the Vienna Declaration. The Russian Federation strongly opposed the deployment of weapons of any kind and the use of force or threat of force in outer space or from outer space towards Earth and had consistently viewed the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems as a cornerstone for maintaining global strategic stability and preventing the extension of the arms race into outer space.

25. From 11 to 14 April 2001, Moscow had been the venue for an international conference entitled "Space without weapons: an arena for peaceful cooperation in the twenty-first century", attended by representatives of more than 100 States and of the United Nations system, which had demonstrated the existence of serious concern about the possibility of an arms race in outer space. Unfortunately, discussions in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes had lately been flagging, and Committee members had not been giving the issue sufficient attention. His delegation called on Committee members to make optimal use of the Committee's unique potential for fruitful discussion of the matter.

26. The current year marked the fortieth anniversary of the first flight by a man in space, Yuri Gagarin. Gagarin's flight had served as a spur not only to technological progress but also to the elaboration of norms in a new area of international law, space law. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had always been at the forefront of that process. The fortieth session of the Legal Subcommittee had been characterized by a useful and constructive discussion on the Russian Federation's proposal regarding the desirability of developing a single comprehensive convention on space law.

27. There was an urgent need to adapt the existing norms of international space law to contemporary needs and realities. Within the framework of a comprehensive convention, complex issues such as the delimitation and definition of outer space, the monitoring of pollution by man-made debris, the regulation of scientific research and commercial activities in outer space, the protection of intellectual property rights and the settlement of disputes could be

resolved in a mutually acceptable manner. The convention would not only codify existing norms, but also make a significant contribution to the progressive development of international law.

28. The package approach proposed by his delegation would be the most acceptable way of harmonizing the interests of participant States without detriment to their sovereign rights, as well as priorities in the field of outer space exploration. By examining each particular aspect of space exploration and the use of space equipment and technology in the context of a single whole, it should be possible to arrive at a carefully balanced text which would form the basis for a universal convention. While the development of a reliable, universally recognized and stable legal basis for the ever-increasing uses of outer space would require significant efforts on the part of the international community, its benefits would be incalculable.

29. **Mr. Pohan** (Indonesia) said that through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in its unique role as a focal point of international cooperation, the application of space science and technology had become a powerful tool for aiding developing countries in their national development programmes and for making the most of their indigenous capabilities. Satellite communication had impacted every facet of human life, from education and agriculture to navigation and disaster management, but progress in technology had not solved the problems of poverty, lack of resources and lower standards of living.

30. Indonesia hoped that all States would contribute to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications with a view to the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. The strengthening of regional and international cooperation would help make the benefits of space technology available to all States. Indonesia had participated in numerous meetings of regional organizations and initiatives and welcomed the establishment of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Specialized Meteorological Centre.

31. Implementing an integrated plan for sustainable development had become an imperative for mankind. Non-discriminatory access to state-of-the-art remote sensing data at an affordable cost must be extended to all countries to ensure an acceptable quality of life for their populations. There was also a need to establish a legal regime for the geostationary orbit to ensure that all countries could have equitable access to that limited resource.

32. His delegation noted that the Legal Subcommittee would continue to consider the item entitled "Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space". Concurrently, information submitted by international organizations would contribute to the development of space law. Indonesia further supported the enlargement of the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space which would strengthen international cooperation and help to maximize the benefits of outer space for all peoples.

33. **Mr. Requeijo** (Cuba) said that three of the principles embodied in the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space were of particular importance to his delegation. First was the need to preserve outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes while promoting international cooperation, economic growth and sustainable development. The transfer of space technology from developed to developing countries was essential and could, inter alia, help in anticipating natural disasters. In that context, Cuba opposed any attempt to amend the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space that did not take account of the interests of all countries, particularly the developing countries. Secondly, Cuba rejected plans which would lead to an arms race in outer space, which would violate the principle that outer space was the common heritage of mankind and jeopardize collective security, and was concerned that certain nuclear Powers were blocking negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on an international instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space. Thirdly, new mechanisms were needed for an adequate monitoring of the implementation of space law.

34. His delegation was in favour of strengthening the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, having regard for the legitimate interest of developing countries in increasing their membership. It welcomed the Committee's decision to enlarge its membership.

35. His delegation was also pleased to note that the Committee was continuing its consideration of matters concerning space debris; more attention was needed to the problem of collisions of space objects, including

those with nuclear power sources on board, with space debris.

36. The strengthening of regional cooperation in space research and cooperation within the United Nations was of great importance, in both scientific and legal terms, and would lead to a better use of space technologies for the benefit of mankind.

37. **Mr. Datsenko** (Ukraine) said that his Government attached great significance to the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and supported its enlargement. International space cooperation was an objective necessity and a substantial factor in the development of space science; a successful example was the International Space Station, which could be used to expand the capabilities of States for using space technologies and for medical and biological research.

38. The importance of international cooperation was reflected in international space law. Consideration needed to be given to issues such as space debris, the status of low near-Earth orbits as a limited natural resource, the use of nuclear energy sources in outer space, intellectual property protection in respect of space vehicles, use of space technology and legal aspects of global navigation systems. The development of effective mechanisms for settling disputes in connection with space commercialization should also be considered, taking into account existing arbitration rules. Another problem was that many States had not yet become parties to the United Nations outer space treaties; they were urged to do so and to ensure compliance of national legislation with their provisions.

39. A multilateral political consensus in respect of outer space activities was needed to expand political support for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space; the issue should be placed on the agendas of multilateral meetings of heads of State, while a similar approach should be used to expand political support among legislators. If international cooperation failed to expand, it would be difficult for many developing countries to create a reliable scientific and educational base for the sustainable development of space technology. It was especially important to secure reliable and economically viable access to outer space on a non-discriminatory basis.

40. The role of the United Nations in expanding international cooperation could be facilitated by the following measures: extending the work programme of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in particular by strengthening partnership relations with industry; expanding the activity of the Legal Subcommittee, taking into account the relevant recommendations of the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development; and improving the coordination of outer space activities in the United Nations system.

41. Ukraine wished to offer its capabilities in rendering space services, exchanging the ideas of its scientists and using its ground infrastructure for joint projects. In view of the needs of developing countries, practical measures should be intensified to develop the training of specialists, which could be done within the framework of bilateral and multilateral programmes to strengthen regional centres for space science and technology. His delegation appealed to the international community to support Ukraine's initiative for a new regional training centre.

42. **Ms. Arce** (Peru) welcomed the consideration by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the implementation of an integrated, space-based natural disaster management system, which would help to quantify the causes of disasters and prevent human and material losses through an efficient early warning capacity. It would constitute a direct benefit of space technology for many countries, like Peru, which were affected by natural disasters. A group of countries, including Peru, had asked the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to include a new item on space and society in its agenda, since civil society needed to know what possibilities existed for applying space technology to promoting peace and development, in implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

43. Peru firmly supported the need to ensure the peaceful use of outer space as a matter of principle and was about to ratify the Convention on the International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects and the Outer Space Treaty in order to contribute to universal accession to the five United Nations treaties on outer space.

44. Peru welcomed the decision by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to expand its membership, ending the rotation of members which had had the effect of truncating the contributions of States like Peru on topics of vital importance to them.

45. **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country welcomed the international trend towards using outer space for peaceful purposes and securing the greatest possible economic and humanitarian benefits, especially for developing countries. It also welcomed the efforts of some countries to reduce spending on military space programmes and use the enormous advances in the field of outer space for development, for preserving the environment and for solving economic, environmental and health problems. At the same time, his country viewed with apprehension the continued existence of programmes aimed at the militarization of outer space and its use for purposes that hindered global development and peace and frustrated the hopes and aspirations of humanity towards stability, development and security.

46. The participation by a Syrian astronaut in a space flight a number of years earlier had been an expression of his country's desire to play a constructive part in the international space effort. Moreover, the Syrian Arab Republic had established a remote sensing agency to permit the use of scientific advances for development purposes and for the preservation of the environment.

47. His delegation believed that the firm establishment of the peaceful uses of outer space required a genuine commitment on the part of the international community secured by clear, constantly evolving legal principles and frameworks to guarantee against the militarization and misuse of outer space and the development of an arms race in outer space. It would be useful, for that purpose, if the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space coordinated their efforts. In that context, countries with major space capacities would bear the greatest responsibility. Moreover, the question of space debris would have to be dealt with more seriously, especially with a view to preventing collisions of space objects, in particular those with nuclear power sources on board. States possessing nuclear-powered satellites had a major responsibility to provide adequate information on their spacecraft and the related components and fuels and on the measures taken by them to ensure the safety of their uses of space.

48. His delegation wished once again to express its satisfaction with the outcome of UNISPACE III, and the adoption of the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development and of the resolutions and recommendations on ways and means of providing developing countries with the right of fair use of space technology and its achievements.

49. **Mr. Ouattara** (Burkina Faso) welcomed the expansion of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and expressed satisfaction at the Committee's continued efforts to promote the peaceful applications of space technologies which were of vital importance to developing countries, including Burkina Faso. His delegation expressed support for the establishment of action teams to consider the recommendations made in the Vienna Declaration; it welcomed the decision by Nigeria to act as coordinator for recommendation 11, and assured that delegation of its full cooperation.

50. Regrettably, in Burkina Faso insufficient financial resources had paralysed the committee responsible for space-related matters and prevented the development of a national space programme and had also led to the recent closure of the regional remote sensing site, depriving the country of an important tool for managing and developing its environment. He therefore stressed the need to address the problem of the exorbitant costs of satellite data and to increase inter-State and inter-agency cooperation and called for more training programmes to be carried out at regional centres and for more long-term study grants to be made available to the developing countries.

51. Despite the remarkable progress in space technology, most countries had not benefited greatly from that technology. Increasing militarization of outer space and the unresolved problem of space debris further marginalized the developing countries and contributed to growing insecurity and indeed posed a serious threat to peace and world security. It was therefore essential that matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit should be addressed on an urgent basis. All relevant bodies, including the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Conference on Disarmament must work to that end. Advances in science and technology were helping the developing countries solve the problems of poverty and underdevelopment; in the current context of globalization, greater solidarity was needed.

52. **Mr. Buroffice** (Nigeria) welcomed the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/56/20) and the recommendations contained therein.

He noted that the developing countries, although they did not have the luxury of their own space exploration programmes, focused on the exploitation of space technologies for the benefit of their people and as a tool for development. Nigeria, for example, had developed a national space policy in 2001 and its national space research and development agency had established a committee on national geographic information systems to deal with issues such as natural resource management, infrastructure development, disaster prevention and mitigation, and environmental monitoring and protection. Its national space policy stressed the strengthening of indigenous capability for space-related research as a tool to promote sustainable development, improve communications systems and acquire modern technology. Implementation of that policy would require the cooperation of the international community and to that end his Government had entered into discussions with several countries in an effort to promote bilateral cooperation and implement space-related programmes. His Government continued to provide financial support for the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education, located in Nigeria, which had just offered its first course, on remote sensing and geographic information systems, and was preparing a second course on satellite meteorology.

53. The relevant international instruments dealing with space law were an important aspect of international cooperation; his Government had signed and ratified two of the treaties on outer space and the remaining three treaties were being studied by the Ministry of Justice with a view to ratification. His Government was organizing a symposium on space law, in which representatives of the Ministry of Justice, academia and legislators would take part, which would discuss space technology and the legal framework for outer space activities and their implications for Nigeria and make recommendations with regard to ratification of the three remaining space treaties. In that context, he urged other States to consider ratifying the international instruments relating to outer space.

54. His delegation welcomed the recommendations made in the Vienna Declaration and supported the establishment of action teams; his delegation had agreed to act as coordinator for the action team on recommendation 11 on behalf of the African Member States. He stressed, however, that in order for the developing countries to truly benefit from space-related technologies, their indigenous capabilities must be reinforced. The developed world had an obligation to help them exploit space-related technology for the purpose of sustainable development, rational exploitation of their natural resources, disaster monitoring and preservation of the environment. In that context, he welcomed the decision by the General Assembly to create a Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, including implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, which would benefit the developing countries. He was, however, concerned that lack of financial resources for the Office for Outer Space Affairs might have a negative effect on efforts to assist the developing countries in that regard and urged the General Assembly to provide adequate resources to the Office so that it could fulfil its mandate.

55. **Mr. Ri** Kyong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) speaking in exercise of the right of reply, reiterated that efforts by the United States of America to develop a missile defence system would certainly contribute to an increased arms race and to the further militarization of outer space. Such activities could clearly not be characterized as peaceful. He stressed that the task of the Committee was not only to promote the peaceful uses of outer space but also to work to prevent the militarization of outer space. For example, the work of the Legal Subcommittee to regulate space activities was not an effort to hinder countries' attempts to explore outer space but aimed to safeguard the safety and security of the world and ensure the peaceful use of outer space and in so doing prevent any country from attempting to militarize outer space.

56. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he regretted the inaccurate and self-serving comments made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which presented a distorted world view. He noted that the United States' space programme was carried out in a spirit of transparency and cooperation and had provided great benefits to the international community. He also reiterated that the programme fully respected the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and relevant space treaties and that to suggest otherwise was quite untrue.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.